

What is claimed is:

5

10

15

20

25

30

1. A method for diagnosing breast cancer, or a high risk of breast cancer, in a subject, comprising measuring basic fibroblast growth factor (bFGF) in a test sample of nipple fluid obtained from the subject, and comparing the level of bFGF in the test sample with samples from subjects not having breast cancer, an increase in the level of bFGF in the test sample, as compared to samples from subjects not having breast cancer, indicating breast cancer or the high risk of breast cancer in the test subject.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein bFGF in the sample is measured using anti-bFGF antibody.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of bFGF in the sample of nipple fluid obtained from subjects not having breast cancer is less than 200 pg/ml.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of detecting at least one additional cancer marker.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein said additional cancer marker is an angiogenic factor.
6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of administering a substance to enhance the flow of nipple fluid from the subject.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the substance is oxytocin.
8. A method for determining the progress of breast cancer, or of treatment of breast cancer in a subject, comprising measuring the level of bFGF in test samples of nipple fluid from a subject taken over successive time intervals, and comparing the level of bFGF in the test samples between time intervals to determine whether the level of bFGF has increased or decreased in said samples.

9. A diagnostic kit for detecting breast cancer or a high risk of breast cancer in a subject comprising reagents to measure bFGF in a sample of nipple fluid from a subject.

5

A

10. The diagnostic kit of claim 9, wherein said reagents include an anti-bFGF antibody.

10

11. The diagnostic kit of claim 9, wherein said kit further comprises an agent to inhibit degradation of bFGF in the sample.

106040-6ET0650